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THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL JOURNAL

CONTINUING "THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER"

JANUARY 1918

EDUCATIONAL NEWS AND EDITORIAL COMMENT

The editor who prepares these notes is always willing to retract anything that he has said which misrepresents anyone. He gladly gives first place this month to a communication dated December 3, 1917, as follows:

To the Editor of the "Elementary School Journal":

**Professor
Meriam's
Letter** In your issue for September, 1917, you quote from a news item that appeared relating to one of a series of lectures which I gave at the University of Pittsburgh. To report only a part of the truth may be as misleading as to report erroneously. Readers of the *Elementary School Journal* should not be misled as to an educational experiment attracting much attention. The editorial writer in the Pittsburgh paper, who heard my lecture, rightly reported my position in part: "Textbooks are a great nuisance and a very great waste of money." But he seems to have been so engrossed in taking notes on this idea, so new to him, that he wholly lost the facts I presented in the next ten minutes, showing the great use made of books in the Elementary School at the University of Missouri.

In brief, I said this: Textbooks are a great nuisance, since, as they are usually used, they greatly limit the intellectual activity natural to active boys and girls; much money is wasted in any locality in expending, for example, thirty dollars for forty copies of one geography in a fourth grade, and in thus securing for the forty pupils the *contents* of only one book; on the other hand, in place of these duplicate textbooks the Elementary School at the University of Missouri provides a library of about 2,500 volumes for the use of about

one hundred pupils. Few schools, if any at all, use books as extensively as this school.

It appears as if the Pittsburgh journalist had in mind entertaining his readers rather than informing them. My destructive criticism upon textbooks and his ironical comments upon my position might be more "readable" than my constructive criticism upon the use of a much larger library and any comment he might make upon the *whole* truth.

Further, I cannot but be surprised that the *Elementary School Journal*, on the part of its editorial staff, should fall into the same error as the Pittsburgh journalist in accepting his report of only a part of a lecture. It is poor logic to conclude that a textbookless school is a school without books, where the teacher lectures and the pupils do no reading. In the Elementary School at the University of Missouri the teachers study with their pupils and together they read very extensively.

J. L. MERIAM

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

Having thus performed any editorial penance which may be due, the writer comes back with unregenerate mind to ask whether

Textbooks and Their Misuse	Mr. Meriam is arguing against textbooks or their misuse. The closing sentence of the September note seems still pertinent: "To be sure, textbooks may be abused, but so may the English language."
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The writer is so much in the dark about Mr. Meriam's beliefs on the matter of textbooks that he is moved to restate his own position. Textbooks are the historically accepted devices for guiding instruction in American schools. They are essential to the type of teaching which goes on in these schools. They are not nuisances. To call them such is either to shut one's eyes to the facts or to adopt scare headlines in the effort to attract attention to an argument which has validity only when applied to certain misuses. Even the misuses referred to are probably far less harmful than the confusion created by extravagant and unsustained attacks.

This statement of the writer's credo is at least no misrepresentation. He is quite willing to defend each article of his faith with an argument as long as the patience of any reader.

C. H. J.

The new Federal Board for Vocational Education has been in operation for four months. Its achievements during that time are presented in the following table:

Federal Board for Vocational Education	Acceptance of the vocational education act by 46 of the 48 states.
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	Approval of plans for vocational educational systems for 22 states, involving an expenditure this year of more than \$850,000 of federal money and at least an equal amount of state money.
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	Regionalizing of the United States for administrative purposes and establishing working relations with state school officials.
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	Publication of a statement of policies.
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	Establishment of more than 50 night classes to train radio and buzzer operators for the United States Army, with an enrolment of more than 3,000, and still growing rapidly.
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	Working out a system of vocational training for the Quartermaster Corps, the Engineer Corps, and the United States Shipping Board.
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The following summary of its statement of policies was given out on December 20 and is of interest because it shows the extremely broad definition which is given to the term "vocational education."

The first official federal definition of vocational education under the vocational education act is made public in a bulletin on the policies of the Federal Board for Vocational Education, issued today.

"To the extent that it is subsidized by the federal government under the Smith-Hughes act," declares the board, "vocational training must be vocational training for the common wage-earning employments. It may be given to boys and girls who, having selected a vocation, desire preparation for entering it as trained wage-earners; to boys and girls who, having already taken up a wage-earning employment, seek greater efficiency in that employment; or to wage-earners established in their trade or occupation who wish, through increase in their efficiency and wage-earning capacity, to advance to positions of responsibility."

The guiding principle of the newly created system of vocational education is announced to be that "the education to be furnished must be under public supervision and control designed to train persons for useful employment, whether in agriculture, trade and industry, or home economics."

To meet the demand for information as to the policies of the Federal Board, an edition of 100,000 copies of this bulletin is being published and distributed to members of Congress, federal officials, state and city school officials, manufacturers, chambers of commerce, labor unions, educators, newspapers, magazines, and, in general, to the interested public.

In addition to the statement of policies, the bulletin contains analyses of the law, together with statistical tables showing the amounts of money available to the states for co-operation with the federal government in securing vocational education.

Attention was called in an earlier issue to the request of the National Child Labor Committee (105 East Twenty-second Street, New York City) that special attention be given this year to Child Labor Day, which has been set for January 28.

The problems raised by the war call for serious consideration. Professor Leavitt has put the problem very clearly for the Committee in the following statement:

That there is need for extra protection for the potential working child at the present time is shown in many ways. Recent figures from a large eastern city show that there has been a decrease in the elementary-school enrolment of over 3,000 children within a year. The superintendent states that it is due to the unprecedented demand for child labor, and that the demand is still increasing.

The enforcement of present child-labor laws and compulsory school-attendance laws will prevent such a demoralization of the school system as that which occurred in Great Britain, and it is safe to say that the children under sixteen will be well protected in most of the progressive states. But even in these states, and under the most favorable conditions, there is need of protecting those children who leave school unnecessarily to accept low-grade positions in shop and factory simply because the unusually high wage is so alluring.

Boys who, under conditions obtaining three years ago, could not find places where they could earn more than \$6, now find it possible, in many communities, to get work at from \$2 to \$3 a day.

Two dollars and seventy-five cents a day is a high hurdle to put in front of a school door. It raises the question in the minds of the parents, as well as the children, as to whether that which the child receives in the school is actually worth as much. Of course, in general, we believe that it is, but we are not in a good position to show the reason for the faith that is in us. The duty of the school, and of the community too, should be obvious.

First, we should study the situation sufficiently to enable us to prove to the potential working children just what another year or two of education would be worth, and to show them the reason why.

Second, we should give added emphasis to the most practical and effective industrial training in the schools to the end that young people will not only stay in school a little longer, but that such extension of school life will increase

their efficiency and their earning power, thus enabling them to give added service to their country later on as the result of added education now.

Third, we should make the greatest possible effort at this time to provide for all children who go to work, in spite of our efforts to hold them, some measure of educational supervision, through the establishment of part-time classes, day and evening continuation schools, and public schools in employers' plants.

The great danger is not so much that children will begin work as it is that they will cease permanently to follow any kind of systematic education. Our problem at this time is not so much to protect children under fourteen from exploitation and from dangerous employments as it is to protect the potential working children from fourteen to eighteen from selling their birthright, and that unnecessarily, for a mess of pottage.

Perhaps the problem can be even more vividly stated by a description of a single concrete situation which calls for educational leadership of the highest order in its treatment. Superintendent Manning's Problem follows to the editor of the *Journal*:

DEAR SIR:

The war has brought us face to face with new school problems. They demand our immediate attention. The patrons expect us to find a solution and find it quickly.

I am anxious for suggestions.

First, some facts to give you a view of the situation, not alone in Buhl, but in many agricultural communities and others.

Buhl is located in an agricultural section—stock, grains, seeds, fruits, vegetables, hay, irrigated country, intensive farming calling for large numbers of laborers.

School district six miles square, 775 pupils, use 16 wagons for transportation, 55 per cent of the enrolment country boys and girls, 200 in high school, 125 in seventh and eighth grades.

Community has sent 150 of its young men to the colors.

Labor situation very critical. Must use boys and girls. Wages \$4 to \$7 per day, \$75 to \$100 per month and board. Children make as high as \$4 per day. Spring work begins about April 1, closing about November 1 to 15. Sixty-five per cent of students of upper grades and high school left last spring before close of school on eighteenth of May. Large number of students will be out three or four months. It will be necessary to let more of them go next spring.

Problem: How to give the boys and girls the education and yet make it possible for the farmers to produce the crops.

If your state or parts of it have this problem, please advise me what is being done to meet the situation.

My solution: I have recommended a six-day week from December 1 to April 15 and a five-day week from September 1 to December 1. The schools will close on April 15 under this plan. This will make it possible for us to do our work well and make it possible for nearly all students to do the work. Use of wagons complicates situation, as it is almost necessary to apply six-day plan to all grades. Some object to applying plan because they believe it will be too hard on little folks. By extra expense of \$1,000 we could apply plan to grades above sixth and continue old plan for other grades.

What is your opinion on this method? Can you suggest another way out?

Very truly,

C. G. MANNING

The principle which was adopted by Superintendent Manning seems to the present writer to be right. Speed up the schools.

**Speeding up
Schools** Industry is speeded up. Production of material is speeded up. Why not speed up every activity which has to do with human conservation? To lengthened school weeks let us add supervision of the work which young people undertake when they go to work. Our whole national life can be turned into a continuous effort to educate for a more efficient use of the opportunities of democracy. There should be on every hand an unremitting effort to speed up schools and to maintain higher and more exciting standards.

The February meeting of the Department of Superintendence is to be held this year in Atlantic City. It is the duty of western school men to help make the meeting numerically as strong as possible. Never was the need greater than now that wise counsel should lead to unified educational policy and action in American schools.

**Department of
Superintend-
ence** At the risk of seeming to favor local opportunity this *Journal* urges the department to consider coming to Chicago. The mid-winter meeting has grown so large and significant that dangers of factional political friction are reduced to zero. There is only one consideration which is of real importance. This meeting should be made as easily accessible as possible to the educational administrators of the country. There is only one way to do this.

That there is to be an expansion of American education as a result of the war is freely predicted on all sides. The directions in which this expansion is to take place will begin to appear as one program of reform after another begins to express itself at educational meetings and in the co-operative work of educational committees.

The following report from the *Journal*, of Columbus, Ohio, gives a view of one of the first aggressive campaigns:

A uniform educational system for Ohio cities and villages will be drafted by leading school men of the state and presented to the Ohio State Teachers' Association at a meeting here Christmas week.

School superintendents of larger cities in the state decided to take this action at a conference here yesterday.

Points approved by the committee yesterday are:

An attempt should be made to organize the state for greater vocational training. Districts should be mapped out and children from rural communities who desire to take the training given free transportation.

Provision should be made for better physical training in city and county schools.

More emphatic and general emphasis should be placed on community hygiene.

More emphasis given to civics and American politics and history.

Improvement and stabilizing of local county and city normal schools.

Organization for a strong movement now for increases in the state levy and appropriations for public schools, high and common.

State support for new school plans.

Everyone who has been interested in trade training for girls has looked to the Manhattan Trade School as the most conspicuous

example of success in solving the problems of such training. A new building is to give external and material expression to the success of this institution.

**Manhattan
Trade School
for Girls**

The following description of the new building is copied from the *Brooklyn Eagle*:

The new Manhattan Trade School for Girls, on Lexington Avenue and Twenty-second Street, Manhattan, a beautiful ten-story building, will be opened early in 1918. The school was established years ago by some philanthropic people of the city, and the Board of Education took it over, with all its equipment, its principal, Miss Florence M. Marshall, and her teachers. It has been in a building on East Twenty-third Street, in inadequate quarters.

The new building will accommodate nearly 1,200 girls, and gives an opportunity to introduce other trades if necessary.

The school prepares girls to enter trades and endeavors to place them in good positions, where they can earn good wages and have an opportunity to advance until they become skilled workers. No "dead-end" trade is taught, although there are "seasonal" trades. It offers training in these trades: Dressmaking, millinery, clothing-machine operating, straw-machine operating, embroidery-machine operating, kid-glove operating, sample-mounting, novelty work, lampshade-making, fancy feather making. In connection with these trades the girls are also taught designing and perforating for embroidery, drawing and costume designing, cooking, physical training, business arithmetic and accounts, business English, textiles, industrial conditions, and trade ethics.

The course in any trade may be completed by the average girl in one year, but many girls prefer to remain longer for further practice, and these girls can usually secure better positions and wages because they are more skilful. Girls are admitted on Monday of each week, and may choose the trade they wish to learn. The instruction is individual and girls are promoted as rapidly as their work will permit. The school is in session every month, except August, from nine until five o'clock each day, except Saturday. An hour each day is given for luncheon and recreation.

The new building which the school will occupy was designed especially for it by C. B. J. Snyder, superintendent of school buildings, with the advice of Miss Marshall. When finished and equipped it will be a model of its kind.

In the basement are the boiler-room, coal storage, receiving and shipping office, and a wardrobe, in which can be placed the clothing of a large proportion of the students, with other accommodations.

The first floor is on a level with the street, and has a large salesroom on the corner, with plate-glass windows, and stockroom, for the sale of goods manufactured in the school. A restaurant will be on this floor for about one hundred persons, and will be open to the public. The kitchen and pantry are on rather a large scale, as they will be used for training girls as waitresses, etc., in cafeterias, tearooms, restaurants, etc.

The main entrance to the school is on Twenty-second Street, a double stairway and elevators leading to the second story, on which are the executive offices; also a lecture-room seating about three hundred persons.

The third floor is given over to the elementary sewing rooms, two of the three rooms accommodating each 80 students, and the third 64. It has stock-rooms, wardrobes, storage, and other offices.

On the fourth floor are trade classrooms, one accommodating 100 students in children's dressmaking, another for 90 students in lingerie, and the third 80 students for speed tests in hand and machine work. There are a teachers' room, a teachers' restroom, storage, and other conveniences.

Four non-vocational classrooms are on the fifth floor, accommodating 34 and 40 students each, to be used by all the pupils in the school for departmental

work in arithmetic, English, textile industrial conditions, etc., and also a room, subdivided by folding partitions, for 120 students in millinery.

The sixth floor has a room for sample-mounting, novelty, and lampshade-work for 70 students, two for designing for 40 students, a laundry for 10 students, a room for manicuring for 12 students.

The seventh floor is open for 212 students in dressmaking, and has fitting-room, cases, etc. The eighth floor is given over to machine-operating for 164 students, with a cutting-room adjacent.

The lunchroom is on the ninth floor, and has a large serving kitchen, to be used as part of the instruction preliminary to serving in the public restaurant on the first floor. While not in use at noon for lunches, the room will be used by a class in design, the desks of which can be easily moved.

The tenth floor is the gymnasium, with lockers and lecture- and shower-rooms. The roof is to be used for recreation and outdoor gymnastics, and it is to be partly roofed with glass.

Two elevators will run from the basement to the tenth floor, and while the girls will work under factory conditions, these will be the very highest type. This means that the most careful consideration has been given to every part of the building, together with its finish and equipment.

The site is 75 feet on Lexington Avenue and 99.4 feet on Twenty-second Street, and when complete will have cost upward of \$500,000 for the building and its equipment, excluding the price paid for the site.

The annual dinner of the alumni and former students of the University of Chicago will be held at the Breakers Hotel, Atlantic City, on the evening of Tuesday, February 26, 1918.

Chicago Dinner

Reports will be made regarding all the activities of the University. Especially interesting will be reports of participation in various forms of war activities by members of the Faculties and by students.

Tickets for the dinner are \$2.00. They may be secured from Dean William S. Gray. If possible, they should be secured before Monday, February 25.

Two clippings have come to hand this month which give such striking examples of labor's attitude on vocational education that they are reproduced. The first seems to show labor opposed to vocational schools. It is taken from the *Buffalo Express* and reports an interview secured during the meeting of the American Federation of Labor:

Labor Organizations and Vocational Education

Secretary Berres, who is a member of the Federal Wage Adjustment Board, said yesterday that the metal trades department is opposed to the proposal

that schools be established for the training of mechanics to engage in trades necessary for the prosecution of the war. He said the men feel that, in the absence of a survey showing an actual labor shortage, these schools should not be established. They are opposed to an increase in the number of mechanics engaged in certain lines if the present number is adequate. They are looking ahead to conditions that will prevail in trades after the war. They do not want three or four men available for only one job, it is said.

"The men want to win the war and are co-operating to that end," said Secretary Berres, "but they do not believe that these schools should be established, at least not until it can be conclusively shown that there is a shortage of labor. That has not yet been proved. If there were not enough men in the trades essential to the successful prosecution of the war the situation would be different."

The second is from New Orleans:

If New Orleans is to be placed on an industrial parity with other great cities and develop its manufacturing and trade resources, vocational education on a modern and improved scale must be a part and an important part of its public-school system, is the view John T. Banville, president of the Central Trades and Labor Council, takes of the situation.

"I notice that of late there has been some discussion regarding vocational training as a great national issue," said Mr. Banville Sunday, "and I was interested, as I have felt the pulse of the labor movement in New Orleans and know that that pulse is throbbing in a desire to aid the movement for a vocational school in New Orleans.

"The laboring people of our city appreciate perhaps more than any other class the great good that would result to this community from vocational education. The laboring people saw in the splendid plan for the Delgado School a broad and easy highway to their future betterment, and the Central Trades and Labor Council was prompt to indorse it.

"Mayor Behrman has always been a champion of the public schools, and he has accomplished much with the limited means at his command. He has built schools for the people and advanced the cause of education generally, and now the laboring people are with him in the great scheme to develop vocational training.

"A great factor in the cause whose efforts are certain to have results is the Public School Alliance, and with all the forces, including Professor J. M. Gwinn, the superintendent, and the members of the School Board, combining their efforts toward one achievement the educational future of New Orleans seems assured.

"The working people, as I know them, are willing to make any sacrifice for the advancement of education, especially vocational education, and they are working now toward this end and will continue to do so until the goal is attained.

“Considered as a whole, I think that no greater blessing could come to the working people of New Orleans than vocational education, and I say again that the union men of New Orleans are willing to strive their hardest to bring this about.”

If one reads these two clippings carefully, one gets a clear distinction. When labor unions are afraid that training is going to oversupply the labor market, then there is opposition; when this fear is removed, labor leaders, like all rational persons, are clear as to the advantages of vocational education.

The moral is not far to seek. Those who are trying to develop schools which will turn out hosts of cheap laborers are likely to meet opposition. Those who aim to promote real efficiency can secure co-operation for vocational education.

With the advent of a new superintendent at Fort Wayne, Indiana, comes the announcement of a reorganization of the schools so as to include a junior high school:

**Junior High
School for
Fort Wayne**

When the junior high school is established the first six grades will be known as the elementary grades. Another grade will be added to the eight now comprising the common branches. Subjects now taught in the high school, such as Spanish, English, other foreign languages, and vocational education, would be introduced into the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades, these three grades comprising the junior high school. Professor Himelick would shorten the regular high school one year, making it three years instead of four years as now.

“The junior high school simply brings the elective subjects to the student earlier in his education,” explained Mr. Himelick. “It gives the student the benefit of high-school training who might not continue his education beyond what is now known as the common branches. Moreover, it will make our vocational school more popular. Many would start their technical training in the junior high school and continue it in the vocational school.”

The Bureau of Educational Measurements and Standards of Emporia, Kansas, announces a new series of reading tests, which are described in the preliminary circular as follows:

**Reading
Tests**

Enclosed with this announcement you will find sample copies of Tests I and II of a Standardized Reading Test. A third test of the series, for use in the high school, is being prepared and will probably be available as soon as orders are received.

It will be noted that this Standardized Silent Reading Test is similar to the Kansas Silent Reading Test which has proven to be very convenient to give

and which has been used very extensively. This test, however, differs in certain important respects.

First, the exercises have been selected from school readers and other books which children read, and it is believed that they furnish a reading situation which is more nearly normal.

Second, three duplicate forms of this test will be available for use. This will make it possible for one who wishes to give the test a second time to use a set of exercises which the children have not seen. The second form of the test will not be released before April 1, and it is expected to hold the third form at least until next September.

This test is just being issued, and for that reason has not been standardized. Just as soon as a sufficient number of reports have been received, standards will be issued and mailed to all who sent their scores to the Bureau of Educational Measurements and Standards.

The price of the Standardized Silent Reading Test is 40 cents per hundred copies. In ordering, please bear in mind that Test I is for Grades 3, 4, and 5, Test II for Grades 6, 7, and 8, and Test III for the high school.